

Washington, DC -- Congressman Vern Buchanan (FL-13) voted late last night against legislation that raises taxes, cuts Medicare and opens the door to a big-government takeover of health care. The House voted 220-215 to pass a massive health care bill that also will balloon the federal deficit. The Congressman voted for an alternative plan to reform health care that failed to pass.

“With unemployment over 10 percent, the worst thing we could do is raise taxes on small businesses and create a government-run health care program,” Buchanan said in a speech on the House floor during debate. “Yet that is precisely what will happen if we pass this bill before us today.”

The \$1.2 trillion House bill (H.R. 3962) cuts Medicare by \$500 billion and increase taxes on families and small businesses by \$740 billion to pay for a dramatic expansion of government control of health care.

“People are fed up with reckless spending coming out of Washington,” added the two-term lawmaker. “They want health care reform that lowers the cost of health insurance -- not expands the size of government.”

The bill also extends health insurance to illegal immigrants.

“That’s just plain wrong,” said Buchanan.

The 13th District Congressman voted instead for an alternative bill that would allow insurance to be sold across state lines, establish high-risk insurance pools and limit frivolous lawsuits.

It would not raise taxes, cut Medicare for seniors, or expand government. Nor would it offer insurance to illegals. The non-partisan Congressional Budget Office said this plan would lower premiums by as much as 10 percent, making health insurance \$5,000 less expensive than under the Democrats’ plan. It would also reduce the deficit by \$68 billion dollars.

“That’s a prescription that makes sense. And one America can afford,” Buchanan said.